

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-20 EUR-12 /102 W
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R 241818Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8341
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION SINAI

UNCLAS AMEMBASSY CAIRO 11487

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT SHUM EG
SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO HAYKAL

REFS: CAIRO 11181, (B) CAIRO 10685

SUMMARY: PRO-GOVERNMENT PRESS ATTACKS HAYKAL (AND NASSER)
FOR SINS OF PREVIOUS ERA. HAYKAL'S VIEWS ON USSR AND
SEQUESTRATION RIDICULED. SADAT, TOO, ALSO APPARENTLY
CRITICAL IN OCTOBER INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE DENOUNCED
IRRESPONSIBLE JOURNALISTS. END SUMMARY.

1. CENTER PARTY WEEKLY MISR AND WEEKLY AL-SIYASI
(PRO-GOVERNMENT) HAVE STRONGLY REBUTED VIEWS EXPRESSED
BY MUHAMMAD HASANAYN HAYKAL (REFTELS). MISR AGREED
HAYKAL HAD PLAYED ROLE IN TOPPLING CENTERS OF POWER
BUT ONLY IN ORDER ESTABLISH HIMSELF AS "ONE CENTER OF
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POWER." SADAT'S GOAL, PAPER NOTED, WAS ESTABLISHMENT
OF DEMOCRACY AND THIS LED TO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAYKAL
AND GOVERNMENT, WHICH THEN STRIPPED HIM OF POWER. MISR
NOTED HAYKAL WRITING IN LEFTIST WEEKLY AL-AHALI, A
NEWSPAPER "WHICH TRADES IN THE PEOPLES' SUFFERINGS."
MISR CONTRASTED PREVIOUS ERA (WHEN ALL OPINIONS WERE
ONE) TO CURRENT SITUATION WHEN ALL CITIZENS (INCLUDING

HAYKAL) FREE TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS.

2. USSR. HAYKAL'S VIEW ON BENIGN INTENTIONS OF SOVIETS WAS RIDICULED. USSR, ACCORDING MISR, LOOKED UPON EGYPTIAN DEFEAT WITH RELISH. FORMER MINWAR SADEK SAID TO HAVE EXPRESSED HIS DISTRUST WITH SOVIET EXPERTS TO PRESIDENT SADAT. SOVIETS WERE EXPELLED ONLY AFTER EGYPT SUCCEEDED IN DISARMING THEM.

3. SEQUESTRATION. HAYKAL'S VIEWS ON SEQUESTRATION WERE ALSO CHALLENGED. EGYPTIAN MUSLIMS, JEWS AND CHRIST- IANS ALL HAD THEIR PROPERTY SEIZED WITHOUT CAUSE. MISR NOTED THIS MAY HAVE LED TO EMIGRATION OF EGYPTIAN JEWS TO ISRAEL WHICH CONTRARY TO ARAB AND PALESTINIAN INTERESTS.

4. AL-SIYASI, TOO, CHALLENGED MOST OF HAYKAL'S VIEWS, NOTING THAT NASSER'S LACK OF DEMOCRACY WAS HIS MOST SERIOUS FAULT. QUESTION NOT ONE OF EXCESSES OR MIS- TAKES BUT RATHER A "CERTAIN PHILOSOPHY" APPLIED IN "MOST FEROCIOUS MANNER." HAYKAL CLAIMED ONLY 14,000 WERE ARRESTED; AL-SIYASI SET NUMBER OF IKHWANIS ALONE AT 40,000, NUMBER UNCOMMON EVEN IN DAYS OF BRITISH OCCUPATION. NASSER'S POLICY, SAID JOURNAL, DIVESTED MASSES OF THEIR RIGHTS TO TAKE ANY DECISION. UNDER NASSAR, "THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO FREEDOM UNCLASSIFIED

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OF PRESS, OF TRADE UNIONS OR OF MEETINGS." THUS, IT ONLY NATURAL REGIME SUFFERED 1967 DEFEAT. AL-SIYASI CONCLUDED IT "MOST RIDICULOUS" FOR HAYKAL TO NOW SPEAK OF ETHICS AND FREEDOM.

5. SADAT ALSO HAD HARSH WORDS FOR "IRRESPONSIBLE" JOURNALISTS IN WEEKLY OCTOBER INTERVIEW, BUT DID NOT MENTION HAYKAL BY NAME (SEPTTEL).

6. COMMENT: THIS MAY BE THE PRELIMINARY SKIRMISH IN WHAT COULD BECOME A REAL VERBAL BATTLE. GOE DOES NOT APPEAR CONCERNED--JUSTIFIABLY IN OUR VIEW--ABOUT VALIDITY HAYKAL'S CRITICISMS. EILTS

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